

# Washington MERRY-GO-ROUND

By Drew Pearson

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18

—One of the most important factors behind the headlines about blockading the China coast was the old rivalry between the Army and Navy.

This was not the only reason for the blockade furor, but it was probably the biggest.

The man who first enthused President Eisenhower re a blockade of the China coast was able, redheaded Adm. Arthur Radford, stormy petrel of the Navy, who was banished to the Pacific from the Pentagon four years ago when he helped organize Operation 23 to propagandize against the Air Force.

Meeting Eisenhower at Iwo Jima on the latter's hop to Korea, Radford spent one hour pacing up and down the island with Ike while the plane refueled, made such an impression that Ike asked him to fly to Korea.

Back from the Pacific, the new President lifted the embargo on Chiang Kai-shek which meant little because of Chiang's impotence, and definitely considered blockading the China coast, which would have meant much. Certainly it would have meant much for the Navy.

## 'Uncle Omar' Bradley

At this point there entered another well-known and important figure. Mild-mannered Gen. Omar Bradley had once spoken out in no uncertain terms against Admiral Radford and his Navy cohorts. Called before the House Armed Services Committee to testify in the Navy-Air Force row, Bradley let loose with some real Missouri language.

"Fancy Dans" was what he called Radford and his admirals.

Last week, "Uncle Omar" was called back to Capitol Hill to testify in secret on another Radford idea—blockading the China coast.

Prefacing almost every statement with the reminder that policy decisions were not up to him, he warned Senators that a blockade of China might force the Chinese Communists to attack Burma and Thailand. If they were cut off from the sea, he said, the Chinese were almost certain to open a backdoor route through these two countries.

This was all the more likely, Bradley indicated, because about 4,000 Chinese Nationalist troops were in the Malays, led by a handful of American ex-OSS men. Their presence would give the Chinese Communists an excuse to attack.

Senator Gillette of Iowa,

Democrat, wanted to know what would happen if war should explode in the Far East. Bradley gave a disturbing answer. The overwhelming strength of Russia, he indicated, would put us on the defensive.

Senators Knowland and Ferguson, Republicans, pressed Bradley on sending Nationalist troops from Formosa to Korea. He replied that two Nationalist divisions were ready for action, but would have to be completely equipped when they got there. And he stressed the fact that equipping them would mean taking equipment away from the South

Koreans and from our NATO allies in Europe.

Cross-examined by Senator Humphrey, General Bradley also warned that stepping up supplies to Chiang on Formosa would set back the NATO defense program by several months.

All this testimony was given very quietly and behind closed doors. This time Bradley didn't refer to "Fancy Dan Admirals." But by the time he had finished, he had just about demolished any of Adm. Arthur Radford's ideas, about getting the U. S. Navy back into action in a blockade of the China coast.

NOTE—Uncle Omar got three assists from three rather important people. One was U.N. delegate Cabot Lodge, who four times came in the side doors of the White House to oppose a blockade of China and urge a tightened economic boycott through the U.N. instead. Other assists came from the British and French ambassadors who delivered personal memoranda warning that if we wanted to blockade the China coast we would have to go it alone.  
(Copyright, 1953, by Bell Syndicate, Inc.)